

ANNUAL REPORT TO THE CONGREGATION  
Unitarian Universalist Church of Greensboro  
2013-2014 Church Year

This year's Annual Report is organized in two separate parts: Board of Trustees/Governance submitted by the congregational President and Ministry, submitted by Rev. Alderman to increase understanding of the UUCG's organizational structure established two years ago with bylaw changes to improve decision-making, accountability, and achievement of church mission.

## **PART I: 2013-14 BOARD OF TRUSTEES – GOVERNANCE PILLAR**

- A. **Board Members: Officers/Executive Committee: President** – Charlotte Hamlin, Vice President – Karen Madrone, Secretary – Sharin Frances, Treasurer – Lonnie Houck; ex officio – Rev. Alderman. Members at large: Sue Beck, Katja Brown, Myra Anne Dean, Suzanne Deering, Ken Knight, Michelle Lee.

B. **President's Report by Charlotte Hamlin**

**Board Focus, Priorities and Actions in 2013-14 Church Year:**

Through the combined efforts of Board members, lay leaders, Rev. Alderman, and dedicated staff members, this first year of Developmental Ministry has seen important progress in the effectiveness of church organization, communication and relationships, and moving forward strategically. I have seen countless examples of effective collaboration between the Board initiatives within its areas of responsibility and collaboration with our new Developmental Minister, Rev. Ann Marie Alderman who joined us last August to lead the Ministry Pillar. I feel new energy, support and more congregational engagement for a positive transformation reflected in increasing worship participation, new members and more children in RE, attendance at programs and a successful stewardship campaign.

The UUCG Board is charged under the Bylaws with fulfilling three primary responsibilities, namely work that is Generative, Strategic, and Fiduciary to be carried out by the Board and its standing committees. This year's Board has worked to fully implement the new organizational structure and address the four Developmental Goals and strategic directions **developed** by the congregation in our application to the UUA last spring for a Developmental Minister:

- 1) *Discern UU Identity,*
- 2) *Deepen Right Relations*
- 3) *Strengthen Stewardship*
- 4) *Clarify Membership*

To address its responsibilities for those areas and its governance work, the Board set the following goals for 2013-14: 1) Exercise effective oversight of Board committees, 2) Evaluate Ministry and Governance, 3) Make church policies and board actions accessible. Additionally, in Interactions with the Minister and Congregation the Board undertook to 1) Provide support and feedback for the Minister, 2) Model stewardship, right relations and a non-anxious presence, and 3) Create a safe physical and emotional space to nurture spirituality for all activities. I believe that significant progress has been made in all these areas.

**Highlights of Board Actions in 2013-14:**

1. Accepted the following Philosophy of Governance statement:  
*The congregation seeks to create a welcoming and supportive spiritual community guided by Unitarian Universalist principles. The congregation establishes governance by empowering leaders by election or call through UUCG Bylaws. The Board, as steward of UUCG's vision and fiscal resources, plans, oversees and supports organizational governance in service to the mission of UUCG. The President guides the church as chief executive officer. The Minister nurtures the congregation and staff through collaborative processes and inclusive programs which embody the mission of UUCG. The Minister*

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*oversees ministry programs by acting as chief operating officer and chief of staff. Accountable to ourselves, each other, and the transcendent mystery and wonder some people call God, we freely choose to be together in sacred covenant.*

2. Approved a comprehensive Employee Personnel Manual.
3. Approved a statement of Covenant between Board and Minister.
4. Set and accepted Board Goals and received standing committees briefings.
5. Accepted new policies on Memorial Fund, Sunday Morning Deposit, Minister's Discretionary Fund, Reserve Fund, and Policy on Committee, Team and Task Force Charters (Policies currently pending: Reinhartsen Speaker Fund and Undesignated Gifts).
6. Approved inclusion of UUCG employees in the UUA Benefits Plan.
7. Supported the work of the new Accountability Committee to develop and distribute evaluation instruments to obtain feedback on Ministerial Performance, Progress toward Developmental Goals and Board Effectiveness.
8. Approved a two year contract for Rev. Alderman as Developmental Minister for 2014-2016.
9. Recommended the 2014-15 budget for congregational approval on May 18<sup>th</sup>.

During the past year, the Board has become aware of the need to review of several Board policies and procedures to protect congregants against potential dangers from individuals and groups. Recommendations are begin considered for a Congregational Preparedness policy recommended by FEMA which will be explored in the coming year.

**Discoveries and Partnerships:**

From my perspective as President, this year has demonstrated that new organizational structure works and that selecting Developmental Ministry rather than a Settled Ministry has helped UUCG to address long-standing systemic issues and organizational needs. Separating the roles of Board Governance/Policy and Minister/Ministry have clarified unclear "boundary" questions from the past as to where responsibilities lie and decisions should be made and the role of the Minister. The Board has been able to focus on its policy, oversight, planning, and fiduciary responsibilities of standing committees while also supporting the work of Rev. Alderman, staff members and Ministry teams.

**Highlights of Board Committee Activities in 2013-14:**

- 1) **Accountability – Chair, Charlotte Hamlin**; members Marty Stover, George Johnson, Marie Houck  
In its first year the Accountability Committee focused on developing instruments to begin an annual assessment of governance effectiveness and staff oversight. Two pilot evaluation instruments were created and distributed in March to obtain feedback from sample congregants on Ministerial Performance Proficiency based on UUA guidelines, and a separate survey addressing progress toward Developmental Goals through activities of the Minister and the Board. Before the end of the year, Board members will complete a self- assessment of board effectiveness.
- 2) **Annual Commitment Time (ACT) – Chair, Nelson Stover**; members Joe Gecinger, Ann Dickinson.  
The new bylaw provision of membership approved by the congregation last year that requires a specified written pledge (of any amount) in order to be a member was implemented this year, clarifying voting members and friend status. The pledge

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campaign focus was the positive aspects of generosity felt by members with the theme "*We are the people who...*" reflected in a brochure and member testimonials which reinforced UU Identity and the essence of Stewardship without establishing a definite pledge target. Responding to this call, members pledged at a level 20% higher than in previous years. A total of \$176,000 in pledge income was reported for next year's budget. Plans are under discussion about the timing and length of next year's Stewardship drive and incorporating more personal visits to increase pledging and expand programs.

- 3) **Archival Records** – **Chair, Sharin Francis** with assistance from Ken Williams, Thomas Clayton and Sue Sherwood  
Archival Records Committee this year continued the ongoing process of reviewing and storing church records and documents for institutional memory. Hundreds of documents were reviewed and stored digitally in an accessible manner for the benefit of present and future congregations. The work of this committee supports discerning UU identity by maintaining information about the history and vision of the church over six decades and interpretation of denominational message. Communication and transparency of Board work are supported by timely online posting of agendas, reports and minutes and responding to questions from congregants about past actions, and personnel questions.
- 4) **Finance** – **Chair, Lonnie Houck**; members Joe Gecinger, Susan Hill
- 5) **Healthy Congregations** – **Chair, Sue Beck**; members Donya Lucas, Becky Floyd, Bill Haney, Larry Graham, Marie Houck, Phoenix Harmony Putney  
Deepening Right Relations is a primary focus of the Healthy Congregations Committee and it was very active and visible this year. To model and teach effective interpersonal communication and its application across the congregation, members led a series of well-attended series of Compassionate Communication workshops on communication skills and conflict diffusion throughout the year. As a congregational resource, a new Lay Mediation sub-committee was formed and trained by Donya Lucas with lay mediators to be on call for in-house consultation. In the coming year, the Committee will lead work with the Board and Minister on a congregational Behavioral Covenant as an aspect of congregational fitness and will offer a Parenting Workshop.
- 6) **Human Resources** – **inactive**  
After a very intense previous year researching and recommending the new Employee Personnel Manual, there were no volunteers to staff the committee this year. The Minister established Letters of Agreement with all staff, approved by the President. New leadership is needed to reactivate this committee in the coming year.
- 7) **Policies and Procedures** – **Chair, Michelle Lee**; member Breeze Dunham  
In its role of aiding and advising the Board and other church groups in the creation and revision of church policies and practices, this year the Policies and Procedures Committee advised on all policy proposals presented for Board action and consulted with the Accountability Committee on assessment processes. The committee maintained the Board Policy Book and added 34 pages of new material in the past year, including policies listed in the Highlights of Board Actions as well as updates to the Ministry Team charters. In the next two years, additional policies will be added as completed by the Board pertaining to management (such as care for people and resources, especially child safety, emergency operations, and disruptive behavior) and oversight (such as

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reports, evaluations, and recognition). The work of P & P supports articulation of UU Identity and deepening Right Relations by thoughtful analysis and research and clear language in the policies and practices that guide the behavior of leaders and congregants.

**8) Strategic Planning – chair, Katja Brown;** members Lonnie Houck, Karen Madrone, Elaine Stover, Rod Swonguer, Phoenix Putney

In its second year, the Strategic Planning Committee sponsored two strategic planning sessions facilitated by Elaine Stover and members of the committee. The fall “Review and Renew” workshop helped leaders of teams and committees leads and the new Minister to review the “Practical Vision” and strategic priorities created during three workshops the previous year. Committees and Teams focused on how their work and collaboration could help UUCG move towards its vision with specific actions in their areas of responsibility and communication. A followup congregational discussion took place after worship on April 6th more than 40 people in attendance at the session to “Review, Reflect and Revise the UUCG Vision.” Discussion set the stage for work in the coming year to bring governance and ministry to work together toward the vision. A Town Hall meeting is anticipated next fall to focus on vision and mission statements.

**Forecast and Focus for Next Year:**

Among the challenges faced by the new Board for 2014-15 are likely to be the following:

- 1) Recruit new leaders to fill lay leader roles and re-activate the Human Resources Committee
- 2) Work with the Committee on Leadership Development to schedule periodic leadership training workshops to draw new volunteers, develop skills, and enhance communication.
- 3) Assist with the development of a congregational Behavioral Covenant.
- 4) Support the work of Strategic Planning in redefining UUCG’s mission and vision and developing a written Strategic Plan
- 5) Update a policy and procedure on Child Safety and establish a Congregational Emergency Preparedness plan.
- 6) Implement a full annual assessment process as set out in the Accountability Committee charter.

It has been my honor and pleasure to serve as Congregational President, and I am grateful to the many, many members of the Board, lay groups, and staff members who have supported and guided me during my term of office. I leave with a renewed sense of optimism about the UUCG’s future and gratitude for this remarkable UU community.

Charlotte Hamlin    May 9, 2014

**C. TREASURER’S REPORT: Lonnie Houck**

**D. REPORTS OF COMMITTEES REPORTING TO THE CONGREGATION:**

1. Committee on Endowment – Chair, Ken Williams; members Dennis Hands, Merritt Waytt
2. **Committee on Leadership Development** – Chair, Ann Dickinson; members Harold Gunn, Benn Kuecker, Donya Lucas, Alex Stoesen

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This year's committee worked diligently to identify and nominate candidates for Board President and Vice President, at-large Board of Trustee Members, and a position on the Committee on Endowment. In the spirit of deepening Right Relations, they sought out candidate suggestions from the congregation as a whole, and held a "Meet the Candidates Forum" earlier this month where everyone could ask questions and hear each candidate's vision. The committee believes it has worked toward Strengthening Stewardship by matching candidates' talents with the right jobs.